

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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## HALVES.

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### CHAPTER VI. BROTHER ALEC.

THE explanation that I had promised myself to obtain from Gertrude had, after all, to be postponed, for it was impossible for any of us to speak or think that evening, except of "Brother Alec." He was by far the most interesting and striking personage that had come within the range of my small experience, and the effect he produced upon us all was prodigious. Mrs. Raeburn, in particular, entertained, or affected to entertain, a very grave interest in her new-found brother-in-law, though it was manifested with her usual caution. She made no pretence to affection for him; she could not even overcome her niggardly disposition so much as to offer him refreshment.

"This room smells unpleasantly of dinner; had we not better go into the drawing-room?" was all the allusion she made to food: but she listened to him—especially when he spoke of his own fortunes—with rapt attention, and watched him like a cat at a mouse-hole.

As generally happens when a man returns to his own country, after long and distant travel, brother Alec's talk was at first confined to questioning those who had remained at home, and afterwards to his own later and English experiences—how he had fared at the hotel at Southampton; how the swiftness of the London express had astonished him; how the official had tried to compel his dog "Fury" to travel under the seat (which, however, a station-master and four aids had entirely failed to

accomplish); and how his fellow-passengers had stared at his parrot, and laughed to hear it enter into conversation. We were by no means astonished at these two last statements.

"Where did you get that dog from, Uncle Alec?" was one of John's first inquiries.

"Ah, my pretty Fury!" returned the other. This dog, by-the-way, was of a super-canine ugliness. His immense weight seemed to have bowed out his legs even more than is customary with bull-dogs; his head was very nearly of the same size as his body; and he had no tail whatever, but only a stump, which protruded in such a manner that it needed most careful adjustment before he could sit down. The most remarkable feature, however, of this attractive animal—I say attractive, because it was impossible to withdraw your attention from him for a single instant, if he happened to be in your neighbourhood—was his eyes, which were fearfully blood-shot, and seemed to resent the fact that they had been fitted into inappropriate sockets. They were not large eyes, whereas the sockets were very large, and the unoccupied portions of the rims were red and ragged, which heightened exceedingly the truculence of his general expression.

"My pretty Fury, yes; he was the first thoroughly English face, as it were, that saluted me when I touched the land. His master was bound the next day for a foreign shore, as I found upon making acquaintance with him in the afternoon, and one of his chief regrets was that his dog could not be taken with him; he had no friend that really loved the animal with whom he could leave him with confidence, and since it took a marvellous fancy to

myself, he made me a present of it. For all its formidable looks, it would not hurt a child."

"That is not so much consequence to us," observed John, rather pertinently, "as that it will not hurt grown people."

"No, no, it will hurt nobody; see how it already has taken to Miss Floyd yonder," observed its owner, "and is licking her hand," which indeed it was; and a more complete contrast of Beauty and Beast than the pair afforded it was impossible to imagine. "Fury is as harmless as Chico here."

Chico was the parrot, who, on hearing his name pronounced, pressed his scarlet head against his master's cheek and clawed his waistcoat lovingly, and, being answered with a finger of acknowledgment, took it

with all care,

And bit it for true heart and not for harm.

"That is surely not a common parrot, Mr. Raeburn," observed Gertrude, admiringly.

"You are right, my dear young lady, though I must beg you to call me cousin, as you do my brother. It is a very uncommon parrot, as I have had to explain to everybody who has seen him. I do not believe there is another such a bird in England. He is called the Night Talker, because all night long he makes conversation with himself, and is generally silent in the day, though my locomotive habits of late have put him out. The kind is rare even in the place from which I brought him; which, by-the-by, I have not yet named. For these last five-and-twenty years, while you have thought me dead, Mark, my home has been in Peru."

"Peru!" exclaimed we all. It seemed so strange that he should speak of home in connection with so outlandish a country.

Let observation with extensive view  
Survey mankind from China to Peru,

was the couplet that at once suggested itself to me. I had read but very little else about it.

"I have been living at Cuzco," he continued mildly, "which, as perhaps you may have heard, John, was the ancient residence of the Incas."

"Black people, are they not?" replied John, tentatively. He had a general notion that persons born out of Europe are black, and perhaps he thought Incas were spelt with a k.

"Indeed they are not," answered Uncle Alec, smiling. "They are of a beautiful bronze colour; at least the natives are,

the upper classes being Spanish. I had thought, until an hour ago"—here he bowed with a certain quiet grace that made one forget his absurd surroundings altogether, and, notwithstanding his ill-fitting and hastily-made European garments, showed the true gentleman within them—"that no woman in all the world could be compared with the Peruvians for loveliness."

"And is it possible, sir, that you should have lived among all these beauties for so many years," inquired Mrs. Raeburn, in a tone of raillery very foreign to her tongue, and which, as it seemed to me, was adopted in order to conceal the interest she felt in the expected reply, "and yet remained unmarried?"

"No, madam," answered Uncle Alec, with grave frankness. "I was a bachelor for many years; the remembrance of one I had left in England"—he kept his eyes fixed on Gertrude with such sorrowful tenderness that it was easy to guess that he was alluding to her mother—"was too strong to be easily broken; but in the end the present outwore the absent, and I married."

"Did you have any children?" inquired Mrs. Raeburn. The whole topic, it was plain, was painful to her brother-in-law; but no consideration of such a fact had the least influence with that indomitable woman.

"I had one baby boy, and when he died his mother died with him," answered Uncle Alec, in a voice that went to our hearts.

There was silence amongst us all, while the tears stood in tender Gertrude's eyes, and Mrs. Raeburn sighed—a very satisfactory sort of sigh indeed. I had not forgotten her husband's revelation at my aunt's table, of the facts of which she had doubtless long been cognisant, and by that light it was not difficult to read to what end her questions had been put. If Uncle Alec were poor, I knew her well enough to feel convinced that he would find himself no better off by reason of the solemn covenant made with her husband thirty years ago; but if he were rich, and without incumbrance in the shape of wife or child, it would be worth her while to conciliate this man—frank, impulsive, simple-hearted, as he seemed to be—to the uttermost. Mark, on the other hand, had asked no questions of his brother, but, with his eyes fixed constantly upon him, had stood with his chin in his hand, his usual attitude when in thought.

He was now, however, the first to break silence.

"You have never told us, Alec, how it was that for all these many, many years we have heard nothing from you, and had learnt to think you dead. How was it?"

"That is a question hard to answer, Mark; having to go so far back in my mind for the materials of the reply. It was something of this sort, I think, however. When we two last parted at Southampton—you have not forgotten that occasion, Mark?"

"I have not, brother," answered the attorney, a slight flush rising to his face, which had been deadly pale.

"When we parted then, you remember how light and buoyant were my spirits; how sanguine I felt of coming back in a few years, with a fortune reaped beyond the Atlantic; how confident I was in my youth, and strength, and wits. Well, not only did I reap no harvest in the field I had selected, but I lost there the few grains—you know how few they were, for you had the like—which I had gleaned at home. You said it would be so; you advised my staying here in England, and showed how, standing shoulder to shoulder (as we should have stood, Heaven knows), we might have pushed our way in the old world; and because your warning had been justified, and because I had a devil of pride within me, I could not bring myself to confess the truth—that you were right, and I had been over sanguine. If I succeeded, I said, then I will go back to Mark, with both hands full of gold, and one hand full for him——"

"One moment, my dear sir," interrupted Mrs. Raeburn, with a smile almost as wide as the bull-dog's; "entranced by your interesting talk, and overcome by the emotions natural to the occasion, I have, up to this moment, wholly forgotten that you are not only our brother, but our guest; your journey has been a long one, and you have doubtless much to tell. Do let me offer you some sherry and a biscuit, until something more substantial can be got ready."

"Thank you, dear madam, I have already dined," answered Uncle Alec, courteously; "but if you would be kind enough to get something for Fury, here; he likes a beefsteak, underdone, better than anything; and a little something hot for my serpents——"

"Your servants!" ejaculated Mrs. Rae-

burn, with an involuntary groan. "I did not know you had brought any."

"Nor have I, dear madam" (I noticed he never called her "Matilda" after that first time); "though, in one sense, my serpents are my servants, since they do whatever I bid them. In those flat boxes, left in the hall, there are a couple of diminutive anacondas, who have been my companions throughout the voyage, and, indeed, have occupied the same berth. They are perfectly harmless, and require nothing but warm bread and milk, with an occasional rabbit."

"He means Welsh rabbit—toasted cheese," whispered John, in my ear. "As for his parrot, it requires human flesh, and will begin with my mother's cheek."

That remarkable bird, indeed, evidently regarded our hostess with no favour, and was craning towards her from its master's shoulder, with open beak and ruffled plumes, in a highly cannibalish way.

"Soft, Chico, soft," said Uncle Alec, rebukefully; "if you happen to have a cocoa-nut in the house, dear madam—but no, that is not likely: a fine fig then, or even an orange, will suit him admirably."

"I will get an orange for him, and see to the other things, Mrs. Raeburn, if you will give me the keys," observed Gertrude, "so that you need not leave cousin Alec."

Our visitor cast on her a grateful look, doubtless more in acknowledgment of her having used that title, than of her readiness to supply the wants of his favourites, about which there probably seemed to him no sort of difficulty. But Mrs. Raeburn's countenance was a study. The idea of giving beefsteaks to the dog, bread and milk to the serpents, and a fine fig to her declared enemy, the parrot, was almost intolerable: yet the thought of that "handful of gold," that was to have been, and perhaps still was, for Mark, overcame her repugnance, and with a muffled groan she surrendered her keys.

"Well, Mark," continued his brother, "I made up my mind, as I was saying, to send you no news of me, unless it was good news; and, alas! the 'good' was years and years in coming to me; so long that I grew ashamed, and almost afraid of writing at all. It is a lame excuse, I feel. But you don't know—I thank Heaven you have never known—what a change can come over a proud spirit, bent beneath the yoke of almost unremunerated toil, bowed by degrading servitude, crushed by the pitiless feet of those whom it would



fain have despised. You, who are rich, respected, and surrounded by those near and dear to you, cannot understand what happens to a lonely, friendless, poverty-stricken creature, such as I was; how hope dies out within him, and the bitterness of despair enters in instead, and turns his blood to gall. I loved you, Mark, at all times, even at my worst, but it was a different sort of love than that of old; there seemed a gulf between us, and as I was changed, I knew, so I thought might you have been. If I had had the means to have come back, haggard and ragged as I was, I should not have dared to do it, lest my welcome might have been cold, dear Mark, and all that was human in me, still, should have been frozen by it. I did you wrong, you would say," added the speaker hastily, laying his hand upon the other's shoulder; "I know it, nay, I knew it then. Forgive me, and forget it."

It is impossible to reproduce the tender earnestness with which these words were uttered. The attorney's face showed signs of an answering emotion, though a certain hesitation seemed to mix with it, that made it very unlike that of his brother. Even "my son John" forbore to utter his ill-timed pleasantries; and Mrs. Raeburn kept a silence, which was really creditable to her in the eyes of those who knew how strongly tempted she must have been to express contempt.

"And when was it, cousin Alec," inquired Gertrude, softly, "that your fortunes began to mend?"

"Thanks, Gertrude, thanks," said the old man. "I am grateful to you for cutting short the recollection of a grievous time—of such dark and weary years, that they cast their shadow even on this happy present. My luck did change at last. A southern gentleman, whom I had the good fortune to rescue from some unpleasant customers in New York one night, became my friend. It was perhaps sent for a reproof to me, Mark, that the talents on which I had reckoned so proudly to win my way in the world were fated to go for nothing, while my mere thews and sinews placed me on the first round of the ladder of prosperity. This gentleman, who had a great estate, and was a politician of some mark in his own country, made me his secretary, treated me in every respect as his equal—for which I felt more grateful to him than for all besides—and took me with him to New Orleans. I felt another man there; recovered my self-respect,

and found, to my great joy, that I could make myself useful to my benefactor, Mr. Pittsburg. My salary was liberal, and, thanks to him, I was introduced into good society, and began once more to hold my head up in the world.

"It was a life not only new to me, but one that would have seemed strange to any Englishman. Among the rich were the greatest luxury and idleness; no literature, no arts; no business was ever transacted among them; splendid hospitalities, diversified by quarrels and duels, alone occupied their time. There was a young man of my own age, a planter, named Redman, who was said to have killed a dozen men with his unerring pistol, and who was greatly respected in consequence. His estate bordered upon that of Mr. Pittsburg, and he was a constant, though, I fancied, not a very welcome, visitor at his house. Mr. Pittsburg had a son, a mere stripling, whom he passionately loved, and for whose sake I soon found out that he kept on friendly terms with Redman, lest he should pick a quarrel with the lad, and add him to his numerous victims. For this reason, I have no doubt, it was that when this Redman behaved himself very contemptuously towards myself—taking advantage, as no other man did, of my dependent position—my patron besought me not to resent it. I obeyed him. I protest that that scoundrel's insults to me were comparatively unfelt, so much more did I burn to avenge the social oppression which he exercised over my benefactor and his family. He was by nature a tyrant, and his cruelty to his numerous slaves was, even in that country, where a black skin is held of such small account, spoken of, though with bated breath, with reprobation and disgust."

"By persons who had no slaves to deal with, I conclude," observed Mrs. Raeburn, coldly.

"Nay," answered brother Alec, surprised at this unlooked-for interruption, "by everybody. Indeed, there were, unhappily, but very few persons in Richmond who had no slaves to deal with."

Mrs. Raeburn concentrated her outraged feelings into one sniff of contemptuous defiance, and the interjection "Oh," whereupon her relative resumed his story.

"I had been nearly twelve months at Rosemount, as Mr. Pittsburg's country house was called, when, walking one morning in the grounds alone, my ears



were pierced by the most appalling cries of 'Help' and 'Mercy.' Running in the direction from which the sounds proceeded, I found myself the spectator of a frightful scene. A negro girl lay stretched upon the ground, while two white men stood over her, one of whom was applying a cowhide to her naked flesh. I had seen black men beaten often, but this was the first time that I had ever beheld the punishment inflicted upon a woman. My blood boiled within me, and, without thinking of consequences, I rushed between the torturer and his victim, and confronted him with an indignant, 'Stop, you coward!' I thought that it was some overlooker of my patron who was thus indulging his brutality, in defiance of his master's orders, for, though by no means what we term a 'sentimental' man, Mr. Pittsburg always opposed himself to harshness in the treatment of his black people. To my intense astonishment (for I thought that I stood on Mr. Pittsburg's land), I found myself opposite Hugh Redman. For the moment he was abashed at my discovering him in the commission of an act which, even among the harshest masters, was usually delegated to their subordinates only.

"Are you aware that this is my plantation?" inquired the ruffian, with his whip still raised over his shoulder.

"I care not," said I, "whose plantation it is. To whip a girl like that is a disgrace to any human being, and an insult to the God who made her."

"We do what we like with our own here, Mister," replied Redman, with a contemptuous laugh, "and you had better get out of my way, or you will taste the cowhide yourself."

"The girl was skulking work," explained the overseer, who stood behind his master, in an apologetic tone. He knew the tales that were told about 'Hell-gates,' as the plantation was termed, from the sufferings of its hands, and did not desire that a new witness to the appropriateness of that title should be added in my person.

"What is that to him?" continued Redman, passionately. "I shall whip whom I please, without excusing myself to any soul alive, far less to an upstart hanger-on like this fellow, who has nothing white about him except his liver."

"I well understood this taunt to refer to the patience with which I had so long submitted to this ruffian's insolence, and

which he naturally enough attributed to my cowardice; but, furious as it made me, I take Heaven to witness that it raised not half the fury which consumed me when he once more brought down the sounding lash upon that poor defenceless creature. Her cry to him for mercy, to God for death to relieve her from such frightful torture, still rings in my ears. In an instant I had snatched the whip from the scoundrel's hand, and laid it over his face with such good will that the blood spurted from his cheeks, as it had done from his victim's limbs. The overseer, who had sprang upon me in aid of his master, I saluted with the butt-end, which, as it happened, was heavily weighted, and it felled him insensible to the ground. Hugh Redman was not a brave man—how could so base a wretch be brave?—unless he had a pistol in his hand, his skill in which gave him so deadly an advantage over his fellows; and with a shriek of rage and pain he fled from my second blow, with his hand clapped to his disfigured face. I was left alone with the tortured girl, who had crept towards me, as a protector sent from Heaven itself, and was embracing my knees.

"Poor soul, what is to be done with you!" was the involuntary exclamation that escaped me.

"Never mind poor nigger girl," was her piteous moan; "she is used to be whipped. Get away, or massa will come with pistol and kill you."

"That is very likely," thought I; but I endeavoured to comfort her all I could. I felt no doubt that, when Redman had called me out and shot me—which it would be his immediate business to do—this poor girl would become the only object left on which to wreak his vengeance; my interference would, in fact, so far from doing her service, be the cause of untold wretchedness to her; so, therefore, it was only right that I should, if possible, secure her safety. I gave her what money I had about me, and certain instructions, which, if carried out—though it must needs be at great risk—would put her into communication with some friends of mine, who were connected with the 'Underground Railway,' the system by which runaway slaves were helped by abolitionists to the land of liberty. She was to make no attempt in the matter until after the result of the duel, which, I felt sure, was inevitable. If I fell, she was to fly; and if—though of that indeed there was but a slender chance—I

should kill my adversary, I would get my patron to purchase the girl's freedom.

"When I reached home and told Mr. Pittsburg what had taken place, he looked grave indeed. I well knew what was passing through his mind, and pitied him from the bottom of my heart. Hugh Redman would not be satisfied with one victim in reparation of the insult that had been put upon him; his hatred would extend to those who had harboured and been friendly to the man that had slashed his sneering face for him, and he would seek his quarrel with him who was far dearer to my host than his own life—namely, his only son. My heart bled for my kind friend; and yet I could not wish that night's work undone, nor that I had held my hand when that poor slave had invoked its aid.

"*Raeburn*," said Mr. Pittsburg, after a long silence, during which he had been pacing thoughtfully up and down the room, "you must shoot this scoundrel, and I will teach you how to do it. You have no experience with the pistol, I believe?"

"None whatever."

"So much the better: you will have nothing to unlearn. You have a keen eye and good nerves, I know; can you measure distances? Well, no matter—we shall have time for practice, if you have marked Redman as severely as you say. The dainty gentleman will not come out to fight till his wounds have healed, I'll answer for it."

"I had long known that my enemy was no favourite with Mr. Pittsburg, but I had no idea how cordially he hated him, till I heard him say those words. From that moment he devoted himself to preparing me for the approaching conflict, and though I understood the intention of but half his teaching, I set myself diligently to acquire all he would have me learn. A billiard-room of very large proportions was built on to one side of Rosemount, and out of this he caused the table and other furniture to be taken, in order to use it as a shooting-gallery; but that very night, and before I took pistol in hand, he set me to judge my distances, bidding me stop short when I considered that I had approached a certain object, within four-and-twenty feet. In the billiard-room, but mostly out of doors, I practised this unceasingly, so that at last I was never wrong, beyond a few inches. In the meantime—indeed on the very morning after his cow-hiding—Redman sent me a challenge, and a meeting was

appointed for ten days hence, the unusual length of time being my adversary's own stipulation, upon the plea that his eyesight had been injured in our recent 'conflict,' as he termed it. The interval, however, was of immense advantage to myself.

"On the outer wall of the billiard-room, Mr. Pittsburg sketched out a human figure, of about the size and bulk of my future opponent, and at this I practised with the pistol for many hours a day; walking slowly from the other end of the room, and then discharging the weapon when I had come exactly within twenty-four feet of the object. By incessant application, aided by a keen eye and a steady hand, I had learnt, before the appointed ten days had elapsed, to hit an imaginary spot on the waistcoat of the figure (exactly over its breast) three times out of every four, nor was the fourth shot very wide of the mark. But while acknowledging my progress, my tutor was well aware that firing at a fixed object was a very different matter from firing at an advancing one, especially when the latter had a loaded pistol in his hand wherewith to return the compliment; and I went on perfecting my aim as much as possible, even to the very morning of the duel. Mr. Pittsburg himself accompanied me to the place of meeting as my second.

"This Redman will endeavour to frighten you," said he, "by his boastful talk and also by his ugly looks, which the whipping you gave him has, I hear, not improved; but pay no heed to him. You will be arranged one hundred feet apart, and when the handkerchief is dropped you will advance upon each other, pistol in hand, firing when you please. It is this man's invariable custom to reserve his bullet until he comes within twenty feet, at which distance he can split a pea. When he comes within twenty-four feet, therefore, be sure to fire; it is your only chance of life."

"Just as my patron had predicted, Redman came upon the ground, talking loudly to his friends—of whom he had several with him—and taking care to let me hear at what hotel in the city he was to dine that day after our affair was over. A livid seam crossed his grim cheek and made him horrible to behold, as he cast his cruel eyes upon me.

"When the handkerchief was dropped he did not, as I expected, cover me with his pistol, but held it loosely downwards,

while he advanced with a menacing air, slightly swaying his arms. At twenty feet from his victims it was his habit to become suddenly rigid, and to discharge his weapon as from a fixed battery. My heart beat fast, as I beheld him thus approaching, but I did not omit to calculate my four-and-twenty feet; and when, as I judged, that exact distance lay between us, I fired and shot him dead."

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the attorney; "why that was murder."

"Not in Richmond county, however," answered brother Alec, gravely; "nor, as I humbly hope, in the statutes of Heaven. For my part, I had no more compunction in killing such a wretch, than I should have felt in slaying any other ferocious wild beast. The thought of that tortured girl, and of the miseries that would have been in store for her, had my aim been unsuccessful, nerved hand and eye, as I covered him with my weapon, and I felt as though I were myself an instrument in the hand of avenging Heaven. Everybody congratulated me (and himself) upon the result of the encounter; yet, strange to say, when it leaked out that the quarrel had taken place about a negro slave, public opinion turned against me, and it became absolutely impossible for me to continue at Richmond."

"That is generally the result of the enterprises of knights-errant nowadays," observed Mrs. Raeburn.

"At least, dear madam, there was nothing Quixotic in my conduct, I hope," returned brother Alec mildly. "I only did what your husband, your son, or this young gentleman here, would surely also have done in protecting a woman from most infamous and degrading treatment."

"A black woman, however," answered she, contemptuously. "What does the Scripture say concerning bondsmen: 'He shall be brought unto the doorpost, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.' People will never persuade me, no matter how they cant and whine, that black folks feel as we do."

"That is a very soothing argument for whites, madam; but suppose you had been born black yourself?"

To look at Mrs. Raeburn at that moment, you would have thought she had been born so, and had kept her colour particularly well. She was naturally swarthy, and the thunder-cloud which formed upon her brow at this rejoinder, in spite of all

considerations of prudence, would have raised the "drum" at any meteorological station. She answered not a word; but all of us, save the new comer himself, were aware that, from that moment, Alec Raeburn had made an enemy for life in the woman he had chosen for his hostess. Though ignorant of the full extent of his fiasco, our Ulysses perceived that he had given offence, and, on the plea of being used to early hours, desisted for that time from narrating his adventures, and asked permission to retire for the night. The attorney accompanied his brother to his apartment, but leaving Mrs. Raeburn in the drawing-room, before whom it was impossible to discuss the new arrival, so we presently followed his example and went to bed.

The last thing I remember before I went to sleep was, my door being cautiously opened, and a voice, half-suffocated with laughter, repeating the words, "Divide, divide, divide," in parrot-like tones, as though Chico had been elected a member of the British senate.

### THE TIRING-ROOM.

THE information that has come down to us in relation to the wardrobe department of the Elizabethan theatre, and the kind of costumes assumed by our early actors, is mainly derived from the diaries or inventories of Philip Henslowe and his partner Edward Alleyn, the founder of Dulwich College. Henslowe became a theatrical manager some time before 1592, trading also as a pawnbroker, and dealing rather usuriously with the players and playwrights about him. Alleyn married the step-daughter of Henslowe, and thereupon entered into partnership with him. Malone has made liberal extracts from Henslowe's inventories, which bear date 1598-9, and were once safely possessed by Dulwich College, but have now, for the most part, disappeared. Among the articles of dress enumerated appear "Long-shank's suit;" "Tam'berlane's breeches of crimson velvet," and the same hero's "coat with coper lace;" "Harye the Fifth's velvet gown and satin doublet, laid with gold lace;" Dido's robe and Juno's frock; Robin Hood's hat and green coat; and Merlin's gown and cape. Then there are gowns and caps for senators, suits for torchbearers and janissaries, shepherd's coats, yellow leather doublets for clowns,



robes of rich taffety and damask, suits of russet and of frieze, 'fools' caps and bells, cloth of gold, French hose, surplises, shirts, farthingales, jerkins, and white cotton stockings. From another document, the cost of theatrical apparel may be fairly estimated. A list headed, "Note of all such goods as I have bought for the company of my Lord Admiral's men, since the 3rd April, 1598," has the sum paid for each article plainly stated, and contains such items as: "Bought a damask cassock, garded with velvet, eighteen shillings;" "bought a payer of paned rownd hose of cloth, whiped with silk, drawn out with taffety, and one payer of long black woollen stockens, eight shillings;" "bought a robe for to go invisibell and a gown for Nembia, three pounds ten shillings;" (Malone conjecturing that the mysterious "robe for to go invisibell" pertained to some drama in which the wearer of the garment specified was supposed to be unseen by the rest of the performers); "bought a doublet of white satten layd thick with gold lace, and a pair of rowne paned hose of cloth of silver, the panes layd with gold lace, seven pounds ten shillings," and so on.

Alleyn's inventory still exists, or did exist very recently, in his own handwriting, at Dulwich College. It is without heading or date, and relates almost exclusively to the dresses worn by himself in his personation of various characters upon the stage. It is of interest, seeing that it demonstrates the assumption by Alleyn of various parts, if not in Shakespeare's plays, at any rate in the earlier dramas upon which the poet founded certain of his noblest works. Thus the actor's list makes mention of "a scarlet cloke with two brode gould laces with gould down the same, for Leir"—meaning, doubtless, King Lear; "a purple satin cloke, weltd with velvett and silver twist, Romeo's;" "Hary the VIII. gowne;" "blew damask cote for the Moore in Venis;" and "span-gled hoës in Pericles." Such entries as "Faustus jerkin and cloke," "Priam's hoës in Dido," and "French hose for the Guises," evidence that the actor took part in Marlowe's *Faustus* and *Massacre of Paris*, and the tragedy of *Dido*, by Marlowe and Nash. Then there are cloaks and gowns, striped and trimmed with gold lace and ermine; suits of crimson, and orange tawny velvet; cloth of gold and silver; jerkins and doublets of satin taffety and velvet, richly embroidered; and

hose of various hues and patterns. The actors' wardrobe was clearly most costly and complete, and affords sufficient proof that theatrical costumes generally, even at that early date, were of a luxurious nature. In considering the prices mentioned in Henslowe's list, the high value of money in his time should of course be borne in mind.

It is plain, however, that splendour was much more considered than appropriateness of dress. Some care might be taken to provide Robin Hood with a suit of Lincoln green; to furnish hoods and frocks for friars, and royal robes for kings; but, otherwise, actors, dramatists, and audience demanded only that costly and handsome apparel should appear upon the scene. Indeed, as we have shown on a former occasion, the desire for correctness of dress upon the stage is of modern origin.\* Still now and then may be found, even in very early days, some inclination towards carefulness in this respect: as when, in 1595, Thomas Nevile, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, applied to Lord Treasurer Burghley for the loan of the royal robes in the Tower, in order to perform, "for the exercise of young gentlemen and scholars in our college," certain comedies and one tragedy, in which "sondry personages of greatest estate were to be represented in ancient princely attire, which is nowhere to be had but within the office of the roabes of the Tower." This request, it seems, had been granted before, and probably was again complied with on this occasion. Indeed, at a much later date there was borrowing from the stores of the Tower for the decoration of the stage; as Pope writes:

Back fly the scenes and enter foot and horse:  
Pageant on pageants in long order drawn,  
Peers, heralds, bishops, ermine, gold and lawn;  
The champion, too! And, to complete the jest,  
Old Edward's armour beams on Cibber's breast.

By way of reflecting the glories of the coronation of George the Second, Henry the Eighth, with a grand spectacle of a coronation, had been presented at the theatres, the armour of one of the kings of England having been brought from the Tower for the due accoutrement of the champion. And here we may note a curious gravitation of royal finery towards the theatre. Downes, in his *Roscius Anglicanus*, describes Sir William Davenant's play of

\* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, May 30th, 1874, p. 163.  
"Correct Costumes."

Love and Honour, produced in 1662, as "richly clothed, the king giving Mr. Betterton his coronation suit, in which he acted the part of Prince Alvaro; the Duke of York giving Mr. Harris his, who did Prince Prospero; and my lord of Oxford gave Mr. Joseph Price his, who did Lionel, the Duke of Parma's son." Presently we find the famous Mrs. Barry acting Queen Elizabeth in the coronation-robcs of James the Second's queen, who had before presented the actress with her wedding suit. Mrs. Barry is said to have given her audience a strong idea of Queen Elizabeth. Mrs. Bellamy played Cleopatra in a silver tissue "birthday" dress that had belonged to the Princess of Wales; and a suit of straw-coloured satin, from the wardrobe of the same illustrious lady, was worn by the famous Mrs. Woffington in her performance of Roxana. The robes worn by Elliston, when he personated George the Fourth, and represented the coronation of that monarch upon the stage of Drury Lane, were probably not the originals. These became subsequently the property of Madame Tussaud, and long remained among the treasures of her wax-work exhibition in Baker-street. A tradition prevails that Elliston's robes were carried to America by Lucius Junius Booth, the actor, who long continued to assume them in his personation of Richard the Third, much to the astonishment of the more simple-minded of his audience, who naively inquired of each other whether the sovereigns of Great Britain were really wont to parade the streets of London in such attire? Among other royal robes that have likewise descended to the stage, mention may also be made of the coronation-dress of the late Queen Adelaide, of which Mrs. Mowatt, the American actress, became the ultimate possessor.

Many noblemen and fine gentlemen also favoured the actors with gifts of their cast clothes, and especially of those "birthday suits"—Court dresses of great splendour, worn for the first time at the birthday levees, or drawing-rooms of the sovereign. As Pope writes:

Or when from Court a birthday suit bestowed,  
Sinks the lost actor in the tawdry load.

Indeed, to some of the clothes worn by actors a complete history attached. The wardrobe of Munden, the comedian, contained a black Genoa velvet coat, which had once belonged to King George the Second; while another coat boasted also

a distinguished pedigree, and could be traced to Francis, Duke of Bedford, who had worn it on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's marriage. It had originally cost one thousand pounds! But then it had been fringed with precious stones, of which the sockets only remained when it fell into the hands of the dealers in second-hand garments; but, even in its dilapidated state, Munden had given forty pounds for it. Usually, however, fine clothes, such as "birthday suits," became the property rather of the tragedians than the comedians. Cibber describes the division, on the subject of dress, existing in the "Commonwealth" company, of which he formed a member, in 1696. "The tragedians," he writes, "seemed to think their rank as much above the comedians as the characters they severally acted; when the first were in their finery, the latter were impatient at the expense, and looked upon it as rather laid out upon the real than the fictitious person of the actor. Nay, I have known in our own company this ridiculous sort of regret carried so far that the tragedian has thought himself injured, when the comedian pretended to wear a fine coat." Powel, the tragedian, surveying the dress worn by Cibber as Lord Foppington, fairly lost his temper, and complained, in rude terms, that he had not so good a suit in which to play Cæsar Borgia. Then, again, when Betterton proposed to "mount" a tragedy, the comic actors were sure to murmur at the cost of it. Dogget especially regarded with impatience "the costly trains and plumes of tragedy, in which, knowing himself to be useless, he thought they were all a vain extravagance." Tragedy, however, was certainly an expensive entertainment at this time. Dryden's *All for Love* had been revived at a cost of nearly six hundred pounds for dresses—"a sum unheard of for many years before on the like occasion."

To the hero of tragedy a feathered head-dress was indispensable; the heroine demanded a long train borne by one or two pages. Pope writes:

Loud as the wolves on Orca's stormy steep  
Howl to the roarings of the northern deep;  
Such is the shout, the long-applauding note,  
At Quin's high plume, or Oldfield's petticoat.

Hamlet speaks of a "forest of feathers" as part of an actor's professional qualification. Addison, writing in the *Spectator* on the methods of aggrandising the persons in tragedy, denounces as ridiculous the

endeavour to raise terror and pity in the audience by the dresses and decorations of the stage, and takes particular exception to the plumes of feathers worn by the conventional hero of tragedy, rising "so very high, that there is often a greater length from his chin to the top of his head, than to the sole of his foot. One would believe that we thought a great man and a tall man the same thing." Then he describes the embarrassment of the actor, forced to hold his neck extremely stiff and steady all the time he speaks, when, "notwithstanding any anxieties which he pretends for his mistress, his country, or his friends, one may see by his action that his greatest care and concern is to keep the plume of feathers from falling off his head." The hero's "superfluous ornaments" having been discussed, the means by which the heroine is invested with grandeur are next considered: "The broad sweeping train that follows her in all her motions, and finds constant employment for a boy who stands behind her, to open and spread it to advantage. I do not know how others are affected at this sight, but I must confess my eyes are wholly taken up with the page's part; and as for the queen, I am not so attentive to anything she speaks, as to the right adjusting of her train, lest it should chance to trip up her heels, or incommode her as she walks to and fro upon the stage. It is, in my opinion, a very odd spectacle to see a queen venting her passion in a disordered motion, and a little boy taking care all the while that they do not ruffle the tail of her gown. The parts that the two persons act on the stage at the same time are very different; the princess is afraid lest she should incur the displeasure of the king, her father, or lose the hero, her lover, whilst her attendant is only concerned lest she should entangle her feet in her petticoat." In the same way Tate Wilkinson, writing in 1790 of the customs of the stage, as he had known it forty years before, describes the ladies as wearing large hoops and velvet petticoats, heavily embossed, and extremely inconvenient and troublesome, with "always a page behind to hear the lovers' secrets, and keep the train in graceful decorum. If two princesses," he continues, "meet on the stage, with the frequent stage-crossing then practised, it would now seem truly entertaining to behold a page dangling at the tail of each heroine." The same writer, referring to the wardrobe he

possessed as manager of the York and Hull theatres, describes the dresses as broadly seamed with gold and silver lace, after a bygone fashion, that earned for them the contempt of London performers. "Yet," he proceeds, "those despicable clothes had, at different periods of time, bedecked real lords and dukes," and were of considerable value, if only to strip of their decorations and take to pieces. He laments the general decline in splendour of dress, and declares that, thirty years ago, not a Templar or decently-dressed young man but wore a rich gold-laced hat and scarlet waistcoat, with a broad gold lace, also laced frocks for morning dress."

Monmouth-street, St. Giles's, is now known by another name; but for many years its dealers in cast-off clothes rendered important aid to the actors and managers. It was to Monmouth-street, as he confesses, that Tate Wilkinson hastened, when permitted to undertake the part of Fine Gentleman in Garrick's farce of *Lethe*, at Covent Garden. For two guineas he obtained the loan for one night only of a heavy embroidered velvet spangled suit of clothes, "fit," he says, "for the king in *Hamlet*." Repeating the character, he was constrained to depend upon the wardrobe of the theatre, and appeared in "a very short old suit of clothes, with a black velvet ground and broad gold flowers, as dingy as the twenty-four letters on a piece of gilded gingerbread"—the dress, indeed, which Garrick had worn, when playing *Lothario*, in the *Fair Penitent*, ten years before. And it was to Monmouth-street that Austin repaired, when cast for a very inferior part—a mere attendant—in the same tragedy, in order to equip himself as like to Garrick as he could—for Garrick was to reappear as *Lothario* in a new suit of clothes. "Where did you get that coat from, Austin?" asked the great actor, surveying his subordinate. "Sir!" replied Austin, boldly, "it is part of my country wardrobe." The manager paused, frowned, reflected. Soon he was satisfied that the effect of Austin's dress would be injurious to his own, especially as Austin was of superior physical proportions. "Austin," he said at length, "why, perhaps you have some other engagement—besides, the part is really beneath you. Altogether, I will not trouble you to go on with me." And not to go on as an attendant upon *Lothario* was precisely what Austin desired.

O'Keefe, in his memoirs, has related a



curious instance of the prompt bestowal of an article of apparel upon an actor attached to the Crow-street Theatre, Dublin. Macklin's farce of *The True-Born Irishman* was in course of performance for the first time. During what was known as "the Drum Scene" ("a 'rout' in London is called a 'drum' in Dublin," O'Keefe explains)—when an actor, named Massink, had entered as the representative of Pat FitzMongrel—a gentleman, who with a large party occupied the stage-box, was seen to rise from his chair, with the view, as it seemed, of interrupting the performance. It should be stated that the gentleman was known to have recently inherited a large fortune, and had evinced a certain eccentricity of disposition. He was now of opinion that an attempt was being made to personate him on the stage. "Why, that's me!" he cried aloud, pointing to the figure of Pat FitzMongrel. "But what sort of a rascally coat is that they've dressed me in! Here, I'll dress you, my man!" So saying he stood up, divested himself of the rich gold-laced coat he wore, and flung it on to the stage. "Massink took it up smiling, stepped to the wing, threw off his own, and returned upon the stage in the gentleman's fine coat, which produced the greatest applause and pleasure among the audience."

To suit the dress demands the actor's art,  
Yet there are those who over-dress the part.  
To some prescriptive right gives settled things—  
Black wigs to murderers, feathered hats to kings.  
But Michael Cassio might be drunk enough,  
Though all his features were not grimed with snuff.  
Why should Poll Peachum shine in satin clothes?  
Why every devil dance in scarlet hose?

Thus, in regard to the conventionalism of stage costumes, wrote Churchill's friend, Robert Lloyd, in his poem of *The Actor*, 1762. And something he might have added touching the absurd old fashion of robing the queens of tragedy invariably in black, for it seemed agreed generally that "the sceptred pall of gorgeous tragedy" should be taken very literally, and should "sweep by" in the funereal fashion of sable velvet. "Empresses and queens," writes Mrs. Bellamy, the actress, in 1785, "always appeared in black velvet, with, upon extraordinary occasions, the additional finery of an embroidered or tissue petticoat; the younger actresses in cast gowns of persons of quality or altered habits rather soiled; whilst the male portion of the dramatis personæ strutted in tarnished laced coats and waistcoats, full bottom or tie wigs, and black worsted

stockings." Yet the lady once ventured to appear as Lady Macbeth in a dress of white satin. This took place at Edinburgh, and the startling innovation was only to be accounted for by the fact that the wardrobes of the actresses and of the company she had joined had been accidentally consumed by fire. Some portion of the theatre had been also destroyed, but boards were hastily nailed down and covered with carpets, so as to form a temporary stage until the damage could be repaired. Meantime appeal was made to the ladies of Edinburgh to lend clothes to the "burnt out" actress, who estimated the loss of her theatrical finery at nine hundred pounds, there being among the ashes of her property "a complete set of garnets and pearls, from cap to stomacher." Dresses of various kinds poured in, however. "Before six o'clock I found myself in possession of above forty, and some of these almost new, as well as very rich. Nor did the ladies confine themselves to outward garments only. I received presents of all kinds and from every part of the adjacent country." But inasmuch as "no black vestment of any kind had been sent among the numerous ones of different colours which had been showered upon me by the ladies," the necessity arose for dressing Lady Macbeth for the very first time in white satin.

Mrs. Bellamy, according to her own account, had been wont to take great pains and to exercise much good taste in regard to the costume she assumed upon the stage. She claimed to have discarded hooped skirts, while those unwieldy draperies were still greatly favoured by other actresses, and to have adopted a style of dress remarkable for an elegant simplicity then very new to the stage. Still the lady has freely admitted that she could be very gorgeous upon occasions; and concerning one of two grand tragedy dresses she had obtained from Paris, she has something of a history to narrate. The play was to be the *Alexander of Nat Lee*; the rival actresses were to appear—Mrs. Bellamy as Statira, and the famous Mrs. Woffington as Roxana. The ladies did not love each other—rival actresses oftentimes do not love each other—and each possessed a temper. Moreover, each was a beauty: Mrs. Woffington, a grand brunette, dark browed, with flashing eyes and stately mien; Mrs. Bellamy, a blonde, blue-eyed and golden-haired—an accomplished actress, if an affected one. Now

Mrs. Bellamy's grand dress of deep yellow satin, with a robe of rich purple velvet, was found to have a most injurious effect upon the delicate straw-coloured skirts of Mrs. Woffington; they seemed to be reduced to a dirty white hue. The ladies fairly quarrelled over their dresses. At length, if we may adopt Mrs. Bellamy's account of the proceeding, Mrs. Woffington's rage was so kindled "that it nearly bordered on madness. When, oh! dire to tell! she drove me off the carpet and gave me the coup de grâce almost behind the scenes. The audience, who, I believe, preferred hearing my last dying speech to seeing her beauty and fine attitude, could not avoid perceiving her violence, and testified their displeasure at it." Possibly the scene excited mirth in an equal degree. Foote forthwith prepared a burlesque, *The Green-room Squabble*; or, *A Battle Royal between the Queen of Babylon and the Daughter of Darius*. The same tragedy, it may be noted, had at an earlier date been productive of discord in the theatre. Mrs. Barry, as Roxana, had indeed stabbed her Statira, Mrs. Boutell, with such violence that the dagger, although the point was blunted, "made its way through Mrs. Boutell's stays and entered about a quarter of an inch into the flesh." It is not clear, however, that this contest, like the other, is to be attributed to antagonism in the matter of dress.

The characteristics of the "tiring-room" have always presented themselves in a ludicrous light to the ordinary observer. There is always a jumble of incongruous articles, and a striking contrast between the ambitious pretensions of things and their real meanness, between the facts and fictions of theatrical life. Mr. Collier quotes from Brome's comedy, *The Antipodes*, 1640, a curious account of the contents of the "tiring-house" of that time. Byeplay, an actor, one of the characters, is speaking of the hero Peregrine, who is in some sort a reflection of Don Quixote:

He has got into our tiring-house amongst us,  
And ta'en a strict survey of all our properties.

Whether he thought 'twas some enchanted castle,  
Or temple hung and piled with monuments  
Of uncouth and of various aspects  
I dive not to his thoughts.  
But on a sudden, with thrice knightly force,  
And thrice thrice puissant arm, he smatcheth down  
The sword and shield that I played Bevis with;  
Ruseth among the foresaid properties,  
Kills monster after monster, takes the puppets  
Prisoners, knocks down the Cyclops, tumbles all  
Our jigambobs and trinkets to the wall.  
Spying at last the crown and royal robes

I' the upper wardrobe, next to which, by chance,  
The devils' vizors hung and their flame-painted  
Skin-coats, these he removed with greater fury,  
And (having cut the infernal ugly faces  
All into mammoocks), with a reverend hand  
He takes the imperial diadem, and crowns  
Himself King of the Antipodes, and believes  
He has justly gained the kingdom by his conquest.

A later dealing with the same subject may be quoted from Dr. Reynardson's poem of *The Stage*, dedicated to Addison, and first published in 1713:

High o'er the stage there lies a rambling frame,  
Which men a garret vile, but players the tire-room  
name:

Here all their stores (a merry medley) sleep  
Without distinction, huddled in a heap.

Hang on the self-same peg, in union rest  
Young Tarquin's trousers and Lucretia's vest,  
Whilst, without pulling coifs, Roxana lays,  
Close by Statira's petticoat, her stays.  
Near these sets up a dragon-drawn calash;  
There a ghost's doublet, delicately slashed,  
Bleeds from the mangled breast and gapes a frightful  
gash

Here Iris bends her various painted arch,  
There artificial clouds in sullen order march;  
Here stands a crown upon a rack, and there  
A witch's broomstick by great Hector's spear:  
Here stands a throne, and there the cynic's tub,  
Here Bullock's cudgel, there Alcides' club.  
Beards, plumes, and spangles in confusion rise,  
Whilst rocks of Cornish diamonds reach the skies;  
Crests, corslets, all the pomp of battle join  
In one effulgence, one promiscuous shine.  
Hence all the drama's decorations rise,  
Hence gods descend majestic from the skies,  
Hence playhouse chiefs, to grace some antique tale,  
Buckle their coward limbs in warlike mail, &c. &c.

Of the theatrical wardrobe department of to-day it is unnecessary to say much. Something of the bewildering incongruity of the old "tiring-room" distinguishes it —yet with a difference. The system of the modern theatre has undergone changes. Wardrobes are now often hired complete from the costume and masquerade shops. The theatrical costumier has become an independent functionary, boasting an establishment of his own, detached from the theatre. Costume plays are not much in vogue now, and in dramas dealing with life and society at the present date, the actors are understood to provide their own attire. Moreover, there is now little varying of the programme, and, in consequence, little demand upon the stock wardrobe of the playhouse. Still, when in theatres of any pretension entertainments in the nature of spectacles or pantomimes are in course of preparation, there is much stir in the wardrobe department. There are bales of cloth to be converted into apparel for the supernumeraries; yards and yards of gauze and muslin for the ballet; spangles, and beads, and copper lace in great profusion; with high piles of white satin shoes. Numerous stitchers of both sexes are at

work early and late, while from time to time an artist supervises their labours. His aid has been sought in the designing of the costumes, so that they may be of graceful and novel device in fanciful or eccentric plays, or duly correct when an exhibition, depending at all upon the history of the past, is about to be presented by the manager.

## PANSY.

WHAT blossom have you brought to-day,  
Beside my pillow, dear, to lay?

Come, let me see my prize.  
A velvet pansy, large and fair,  
With petals yellow as your hair,  
And purple as your eyes.

I think I know the very spot,  
Where, bordered with forget-me-not,  
This lovely blossom grew;  
We knew that pansy bed of old,  
A sweet, swift story there was told,  
Between black eyes and blue.

It seems but yesterday we stood,  
Each unto each God's greatest good,  
Beneath the morning sky!  
We stood as lovers stand, to part,  
(But hand from hand, not heart from heart),  
With lingering good-bye.

Upon your snow-white dress you wore  
One blossom, plucked an hour before,  
While still the dew was wet:  
A purple pansy, fair as this,  
I took it, with your first shy kiss;  
I have that blossom yet.

We thought our fate was hard that day,  
But, darling, we have learned to say,  
"Whatever is, is best."  
That far-off parting which is o'er,  
Foretold one longer, on before,  
Awaiting which we rest.

We wait as friends and lovers do,  
Each reading true heart through and through,  
Until that parting come.  
Then if you speak I shall not hear,  
I shall not feel your presence near,  
Nor answer. Death is dumb.

You may bring pansies, too, that day,  
To spread above the senseless clay,  
But none so sweet as this:  
And never one like that dear flower,  
You gave me in love's dawning hour,  
With your shy clinging kiss.

I may not give you courage strong,  
And help and counsel all life long,  
As once I hoped to do.  
But, love, be fearless, faithful, brave;  
The pansies on my quiet grave  
May bring heart's-ease for you.

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.  
CASANOVA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III. OUT IN THE  
WORLD.

SORADACI, the new comer, imposed as a comrade upon Casanova by the relentless Signiory, is a paltry scoundrel, much despised by that eminent personage, whose own villainies are of the heroic type, and who looks disdainfully on the wretch who

asks if he is sure to be allowed ten sous a day for his maintenance. Scornfully he tells the shabby rascal to eat, drink, and be as merry as his inferior nature will admit of. Meanwhile the sordid creature's life hangs upon a thread. All is ready and ripe for flight, and this worm alone is in the way. Casanova reflects. There is the "short way" certainly, but the Signor Casanova—no bad hand at the rapier—has no stomach for deliberate murder. One must draw a line somewhere. Faro, cabala, and other trifles he is ever ready to indulge in; but at murder he stops short. He tests Soradaci, to find if he can trust him, and is betrayed in a small matter; but this reveals the pitiful subject of the experiment as an abject coward and superstitious slave. Astute Casanova nearly frightens him to death, and, confiding in his terror, sets his accomplices to work, predicting their appearance in his cell as a vision. Soradaci, submitted to frightful oaths and vows, sinks to the ground in a paroxysm of fear, dreading instant death. On the 31st of October the gaoler Lawrence comes to the cell and carries back a book to Balbi with a concealed message, telling him to crash through the ceiling at about mid-day. At the appointed hour a few strokes demolish the slight impediment remaining, and Father Balbi sees his colleague for the first time. Soradaci, who is, among other things, a barber, is compelled to shave the accomplices, and Casanova, mounting through the aperture made with so much trouble, finds the fat count, and despairs of getting him over the leads and out of trouble. The author of the scheme now inspects the roof, and, thinking himself sure to force his way through, cuts the bedclothes into strips and makes a rope a hundred feet long, taking immense care to secure every knot. By nightfall the hole in the roof is made. The woodwork has been split and splintered away, but the lifting of the riveted sheet of lead is a serious affair. Balbi and Casanova combining their strength, succeed in pushing the spoutoon between the gutter and the sheet above it, and putting their shoulders to it, double up the sheet lead to make a sufficient opening, but find the light of the crescent moon a terrible impediment. On a night like this everybody will be abroad on the square of St. Mark, and the shadows of escaping prisoners will hardly fail to be seen, and remarked. There is nothing for it but to wait till the



moon is down. The fat count, meanwhile, preaches ineffectually, and endeavours to dissuade his friends from their rash adventure. He points out the angle of the roof, the risk of the descent, the chances of being shot by the sentinels, and the agreeable prospect of being dashed to pieces. Inwardly cursing his cowardly companions, Casanova yet conceals his fury and persuades the fat count to part with his last gold pieces—the whole capital of the enterprise. This achieved, he waits patiently till the moon is down, and then quickly passes out on to the roof, followed by the monk—the count being given up as a bad job. The leaden sheets which cover the roof are slippery with dew, and afford not the slightest foothold on the terrible slope. Casanova, feeling that the slightest mishap will precipitate him into the canal, which he knows to be too shallow to save him from being dashed to pieces, is yet undaunted, and leads the way in the painful and dangerous ascent. With their packs on their backs, Casanova and Balbi attain the summit of the ducal palace and sit astride upon it. The outlook is bad. There seems to be nothing for it but to drop into the canal, till quick-eyed Casanova espies a skylight. Like a ready tactician, he instantly grasps the situation. The skylight probably opens into some garret of the ducal palace, whence a descent into the deserted official chambers of the Republican government would be easy. If the ascent of the slippery roof were gruesome work in the darkness, the descent is ten times more awful. If the Signor Casanova miss his mark and fail to “bring up” against the skylight, he may commend himself to Paralis, his familiar demon; for the force of gravity, unless interfered with, will take him to the bottom of the shallow canal already spoken of. A moment’s hesitation, and his mind is made up. It is now or never; do or die. Slipping down the dangerous leads, he finds himself—in a space of time short enough, but which feels like an age—astride upon the skylight. The window and its bars are soon forced, and after having lowered his companion, Casanova finds nothing to which to fasten the rope to enable him to follow. Casting about, he finds a small cupola under repair, and near it a ladder, to which he attaches his rope and prepares to descend; but, in mortal terror that the ladder, when released, will fall into the canal and make a splash, he climbs down to the gutter,

and, at imminent risk of his life, forces up one end of the ladder under the skylight till it sticks fast for a moment and ultimately descends into the garret, where its end is received by Balbi. Casanova now descends and finds himself, with his companion, in a loft some thirty paces long by twenty broad. Feeling the effect of his tremendous exertions, he falls flat on the ground, and actually sleeps soundly for three hours and a half, until the monk Balbi shakes him again into life. It is now late—about five o’clock in the morning. A glance around shows that this loft forms no part of the prison. There must be a way out. The lock is forced and entry made into a chamber where a key is on the table. Next, through the gallery of the archives, down a little stone staircase, and the whilome prisoners are in the ducal chancery. There is an open window by which descent were easy into the labyrinth of little courts which surrounds the church of St. Mark, but no such madness is to be thought of. On the bureau is an iron instrument for punching holes in parchment to attach the seals. Casanova thinks a little incidental burglary may not be amiss, and “prises” open a desk or two, in the hope of finding sequins. In vain. There is no money in the desk, and the chancery—after the manner of chanceries—is difficult to get out of. The lock will not yield, so a panel of the door must be broken away. This occupies half an hour, and Casanova, after pushing his friend through, is dragged through by him, the ragged wood scarifying him not a little. With clothes torn to rags, the confederates slip down two pairs of stairs, and find themselves stopped by a massive door, impregnable except by artillery. There is nothing to do now but to sit down and wait till the porter or the sweepers come to open the door. Meanwhile there is no lack of occupation. Balbi has preserved a whole skin, but energetic Casanova is cruelly mangled. Blood streams from the terrible cuts inflicted by the leads of the gutter, and the lesser wounds incurred in being dragged through the hole in the door. With some difficulty the blood is stanchied, and the greater wounds bound up, and the hero of the adventure, who no longer doubts its perfect success, dons once more the famous taffety coat with silver lace, adjusts his hose over his bandaged limbs, puts on three shirts, gorgeously trimmed with point lace, and then laughs heartily at the figure he cuts in

a summer ball dress on the morning of the 1st of November. The grand mantle of poult-de-soie he throws over Balbi, telling him that he looks as if he had stolen it. Putting on the gold-laced hat with the white plume, Casanova then looks out of the window, an imprudence which might have spoiled all, but really helped him onwards. Some early idlers observe the apparition of the gold-laced hat, and fetch the porter, under the impression that somebody had been locked in the ducal palace by mistake over night. Casanova hears the rattle of keys, and looking through a crack in the door espies a man, alone, mounting the staircase, with a huge bunch of keys in his hand. Weapon in hand, he awaits the guardian; but there is no occasion for violence. The door opens widely, the sleepy fellow opens his eyes and mouth in astonishment—little wotting what a narrow escape he has had for his life—as the companions, not appearing in too great a hurry, but moving quickly down the Giant's Staircase, pass through the grand entrance of the palace, cross the little square, and step into a gondola. "I want to go to Fucino; call another gondolier," cries Casanova. Away they go, the custom-house is soon left behind, and the gondoliers are clearing with vigorous strokes the canal of the Giudecca. Half-way along this canal, Casanova asks innocently:

"Shall we be soon at Mestri?"

"But, signor, you told me to go to Fucino."

"You are mad. I told you Mestri."

The second barcarol backs up his "mate," and, to the rage of Casanova, stupid Balbi sides with the men. Casanova, feeling as if he would like to massacre his companion, then bursts into a fit of hilarity, and says perhaps he did say Fucino, but must go to Mestri all the same. The gondoliers offer to row him to England if he wishes it. Enjoying the morning air with a zest he has never hitherto experienced, Casanova speeds on to Mestri, lands quickly, catches a vetturino, and gets to Treviso without mishap. Here commence the difficulties of passing the frontier, and escaping from the dominion of the most Serene of all Republics. Further progress by post is out of the question. Firstly, it would be dangerous; secondly, there is no money left except a few francs. The shortest way is by Bassano, but Casanova prefers the longer route, by Feltri, as being a safer line to the territory

of the bishop of Trent. Along unfrequented paths, and across fields, the associates make straight towards the frontier, and soon put four and twenty miles between them and Treviso. They now part company, agreeing to meet at Borgo di Valsugano, the first town over the border. Leaving the monk to creep along the valleys, Casanova pushes over the hills, and after extracting six sequins from an unwilling acquaintance, not without threatening his life, buys a riding-coat and boots, and mounted on a hired ass, arrives at La Scala, passes the guard, and drives behind a pair of horses into Valsugano, free again at last.

At Botzen, Casanova receives funds from his old patron, Bragadino, and passing through Munich and Strasbourg, fetches up in Paris on the 3rd of January, 1757. He is well received by his old friend Baletti, and is on his way to Versailles in quest of the Abbé de Bernis, Minister of Foreign Affairs, when he finds the whole town upset by the attempt of Damien to assassinate the king. Casanova becomes the fashion—after a fashion. De Bernis introduces him to the Duke de Choiseul, who, inclined enough to listen to him, is crushed by the Italian's would-be verbosity. Like everybody else, the Duke de Choiseul is anxious to hear the story of the flight from the Piombi. Injudicious Casanova says that the narrative will occupy two hours.

"Give me an abridgment," saith the duke.

"Brief as I may be, I shall want two hours." Pitiless raconteur!

"Reserve the details for another day."

"In this story there is nothing of interest but the details."

"So, so, but you can cut them down," a remark which gives a high idea of the duke's editorial power.

"Very well," says Casanova, and gives the duke a dry story in a few words, wearies him, and is dismissed with a few kindly words, the duke rejoicing in his departure.

This interview with the Prime Minister of France is hardly so disastrous as it deserves to be. Casanova is sent to Dunkirk on a mission which looks very much like "secret service," and by the help of De Bernis, makes the acquaintance of the famous financiers Pâris-Duvernay, and also that of the Count de Boulogne. The Duvernays want to raise twenty millions of francs, to establish a military school; and M. de Boulogne is burning to bring

the French navy into such perfect condition, as to make a descent upon England. De Bernis, wishing to serve his scampish but interesting friend, has introduced him to these people as a financier of rare ability. Casanova knows no more of finance to-day than he did of cabala a few years ago, when old Bragadino insisted on believing him a conjuror; but he is equal to the occasion, saying to himself, "They think I am a financier, therefore I have the reputation of one; therefore I am one." The gambler's brain soon produces a dainty dish to set before a king. The nature of the dish may easily be guessed—a voluntary contribution of the nation towards the royal exchequer, costing but little to collect. Casanova states this without mentioning what his plan really is, when Duvernay cuts him short by handing him a portfolio, with the words:

"Monsieur Casanova, here is your project."

Alas! he is forestalled: his projected plan for a royal lottery has already been proposed by one Calsabigi, a famous manager of lotteries. The bold Casanova is not dashed at this, "not a jot," but throws in his lot with his rival, backing up the scheme very cleverly and boldly. The timid financiers object that "there is no capital."

"A mere matter of detail. Royal treasury—decree of council—and the thing's done. All that is required is that the nation shall suppose the king in a condition to pay a hundred millions."

"But how pay this sum if lost?"

"By the time it is lost there will be a hundred and fifty millions to pay it with."

"But yet the king may lose an exorbitant sum at the first drawing."

"All the better for the popularity of the lottery. The king has for himself one chance out of five, and must infallibly make his twenty millions."

\* The Brothers Calsabigi have been at work for two long years, have every detail of their lottery scheme cut and dried, but have not made as much way in all that time, as Casanova has in a few minutes by his happy audacity, and blissful ignorance of the difficulties of the enterprise. An alliance is soon made, and the young partner elected spokesman. The decree is issued, and Casanova gets a pension of four thousand francs and the control of six bureaux, the Calsabigi still retaining the direction of the affair. Casanova now

sells five of his allotted bureaux for ten thousand francs, and puts his servant in the sixth, situated in the Rue St. Denis. His next plan is to draw custom to his own bureau, and to do this he announces that every winning ticket signed by him will be paid at the said bureau twenty-four hours, instead of a week, after the drawing. This skilful move draws the great crowd of gamblers to the Rue St. Denis, to the great profit of the Venetian, who gets six per cent. on the receipts. All the other holders of bureaux are furious and raise a terrible howl, but the only answer they get is a recommendation to follow the lead of Casanova, if they have the money to do it with. The late prisoner "under the leads" is now making money quickly. The lottery is a complete success, and, as he predicted, the great financiers are the first to complain that the profit to the exchequer of six hundred thousand francs on the first drawing, on a receipt of two millions, is "too great" to inspire hope in the people; but, luckily, Paris wins heavily, and the success of the capital is sufficient to insure the success of the scheme. By the simple "gift of the gab" Casanova has secured an income of a hundred thousand francs a year—a considerable revenue in the middle of the eighteenth century. It becomes the fashion to play at the lottery. Our adventurer rolls in his carriage, overdresses himself after the manner of his kind, and has his pockets stuffed with lottery tickets, which he sells everywhere and at all times, in season and out of season; persons of quality surround him at the opera and at the theatres, investing heavily, and the fortunate youth returns home nightly with pockets laden with gold.

Behold Casanova then a man of fashion—in his own opinion at least. The present historian indeed has grave doubts whether the wonderful Venetian adventurer ever really advanced much beyond the Bohemian fringe of good society. It is not difficult to picture in the mind's eye the ineffable sneer with which the Rohans and Richelieus welcome the ill-mannered foreigner who dresses like a mountebank, talks loudly and tediously, plays heavily, and sells lottery tickets between the acts of the opera. He himself, lucky fellow, is snugly encased in the triple armour of vanity. He is not, physically speaking, a bad specimen of a man, but his peculiar monomania is Admirable Crichtonism. He is an elegant poet, a profound scholar, an excellent wit, an accomplished swords-



man, a superb dancer, makes the best bow in Europe, deals at faro with elegance and good fortune, is a perfect ladies' man, wears the biggest diamonds, the finest watches, snuffboxes, and clothes in Paris. It never occurs to the self-satisfied creature that the narrative—taking two hours to get through—of his escape from the Piombi tries the patience of his hearers, and that his excessively dignified airs are heartily enjoyed and laughed at by his Parisian friends. Nevertheless, it must be candidly admitted that Casanova possesses one great element of success—he never shirks a quarrel. The slightest hint as to his style of dealing at faro, the faintest disinclination to believe his often astounding narratives, and he is ready, sword in hand. He believes firmly in a certain "botte secrète"—a cunning thrust which never fails him. Moreover, he wears a sword of the utmost length permitted in polite society, and when he has "cleaned out" his pigeon, is ready to truss him. On a memorable occasion he has the honour of fighting a member of the house of La Tour d'Auvergne, whom he wounds slightly, and then attends upon as doctor and hospital nurse.

This memorable encounter procures him the friendship of his late adversary, a gallant unsuspecting gentleman, who introduces him to his aunt, the Marchioness d'Urfé, a lady of illustrious lineage, but mad as a March hare, with brain bemuddled with Rosicrucian dreams, a firm believer in cabala and spells—the ready prey of a charlatan. This old lady has heard of Casanova and of his reputation as a magician, and is delighted to know him. His knowledge of the recondite mysteries of Paracelsus is very "general," but, by listening adroitly, he soon finds out what he is supposed to know. Concealing his astonishment, he hears the great lady discourse learnedly on the philosopher's stone, and is admitted to her library, which had once belonged to the great d'Urfé and Renée de Savoie his wife. She possesses a commentary of Raymond Lully explaining the mysteries of Roger Bacon and Heber, and the Tree of Diana constructed by the famous Taliamed (De Maillet), whom she believes to be still living, and from whom she receives imaginary letters. From this wonderful library they pass into a not less marvellous laboratory—rather alchemical than chemical—and finally sit down cozily together to construct the pentacle of Polyphilus. Casanova's early reading in

conjuring and his wonderful memory now stand him in good stead. He boldly compares notes, and comes out of the trial gloriously; and really knowing something of astronomy as well as of astrology, mixes up the planets so skillfully with the pentacle of Solomon, that the old lady is fairly bewitched by her new friend. They discourse concerning their familiar spirits. Casanova "rings in" his old friend Paralis, and pretends to teach his patroness how to make the magic pile, and get cabalistically at the Unknown. Lest all this should seem pure romance, let us recollect that at this moment Saint-Germain is in Paris, and enjoys the reputation of being at least three hundred years old. Credulity reigns in every salon, and Casanova reigns in that of the Marchioness d'Urfé. It is difficult to say what influence his fine dark eyes may have produced on the possibly still impressionable marchioness; but her intense devotion to the abstract sciences favours the conclusion that in Casanova she only sees the "adept"—the deft wielder of cabala, the depositary of the Rosicrucian secrets of spiritual and physical regeneration, the mortal recipient of the wisdom of Paralis and other familiar spirits. Casanova himself is at times overpowered by her redundant faith. She believes him to be possessed of the philosopher's stone, and to be in familiar converse with the elementary spirits.

Astute Giacomo dines daily with the great lady, and is much exercised in his mind how best to disabuse her, if at all, and concludes that the best thing he can do is to let things alone. His occasional colloquies with the very tough and well-seasoned organ which, in his case, supplies the place of a conscience, are amusing enough, and it is curious to see how his scruples yield before a superb rent-roll. The great dame herself is a singular creature. Her Rosicrucian and alchemic mania apart, she is stingy enough and shrewd withal, speculating freely with her immense revenues and making great profits. So they go on dining together and spending long, and, to Casanova, inexpressibly dull evenings over abracadabra and other magical mysteries.

During this specially successful period of his career the Venetian establishes a slight foothold in really good society—thanks to Madame d'Urfé and De Bernis. Royal "France"—Louis the Well-beloved—is poorer than ever, and certain Dutch merchants hint to the successful

adventurer that a loan might be made on a portion of the crown jewels. Lucky in some negotiations for Madame d'Urfé, who presents him with a handsome "brokerage," Casanova is hardly so fortunate at first in the affair of the great loan, which falls through for a while. Pending these weighty affairs, he works his cabalistic pyramid for the benefit of his host, a Dutch banker, and by extraordinarily lucky blunders wins him a fortune. By sheer good fortune he makes three hundred thousand florins for himself, and has an offer of the hand of a banker's daughter and a partnership in the firm. As if good luck were completely on his side, he also, at last, completes the arrangement for the French loan, and is triumphant "all round."

Were our adventurer a reasonable being, his story should finish here; but an existence in Holland—wife, money, and iceboats into the bargain—does not commend itself to the genius of Casanova. He burns to revisit Paris and cut a dash there, the vulgar love of show and expense triumphing over every other consideration. Like many more of his kind, he "leaves his luck" in Holland, and, moreover, runs up a score of forty thousand florins for diamonds.

Returned to Paris, he sets up a magnificent establishment in the Rue Montorgueil, launches a couple of carriages, a magnificent coachman, five horses, grooms, and lackeys; invites Madame d'Urfé and other members of the fashionable world to dinner, and secures the friendship of another great lady, Madame de Romain. The contact of all this good society and the possession of capital inspire him with the wish to make a fortune honestly, and he becomes a manufacturer, thereby getting completely out of his depth. His speculation is to produce upon silk, by printing, similar effects to those produced at Lyons by weaving. He secures an expert to do the work and court patronage to help him on, engages immense works, buys hundreds of pieces of costly goods, hires a crowd of workpeople, and puts three hundred thousand francs into the speculation at once, risking besides his entire fortune. Paralysis, or some other protecting genius of Casanova, is apparently displeased at this performance, for trouble arises immediately. His intrigues involve him in a criminal prosecution. Getting out of this difficulty, he stumbles on another, for the war reducing business to a low ebb, he finds himself under the necessity of taking a partner, who puts

fifty thousand francs into the concern. Three days after payment his treasurer "bolts" with the money, and the new partner insists on restitution. Casanova is arrested, but is released by Madame d'Urfé. Ill-treated and cheated out of his "dues" on the first government loan, he is yet courageous enough to undertake the negotiation of a second, and settling his affairs in Paris, departs once more for Holland, furnished with a hundred thousand francs in money and an equivalent capital in jewels.

### THE GUNS OF BURRISAU.

STRANGE noises have always played their part in the mysteries which surround us. Visitants from the unseen world are not more distinguished by their almost universal fancy for white clothing, than by a habit of indulging in, or causing, sounds which have, apparently, no purpose; or, at any rate, lead to no obviously useful end. Objections to sleeping in the wainscoted chambers of old manor-houses, or of lonely moated granges, are generally based on the impossibility of repose, where such odd noises are heard at unearthly hours. The ghost that so long troubled the Wesley family was never, we believe, seen, but confined its demonstrations to interrupting family prayers, knocking against the wall, and so on. In later days, the spirits that have come to us from the world beyond the grave, via the United States, have adopted rapping as their especial form of conversation. There have been other more august mysteries of sound too; some, perhaps, entirely suggested by the imagination or the associations of a locality; others, not authenticated, but referrible probably to some physical cause not clearly ascertained. Among the first may be classed the strange noises as of conflict—clashing of shields, snorting of horses, and the like—heard by unwilling listeners near the plains of Marathon, a legend effectively introduced by Ugo Foscolo in his poem of *I Sepulcri*; among the latter, the sudden strains, as of an unearthly music, which have swept over ships as they entered, unwittingly, the fated circle of a Mozambique cyclone. The phenomenon of which we propose to give a very brief notice certainly claims to rank in the first class of mysterious noises, for due as it undoubtedly is to natural causes, those causes have never

been explained with anything approaching a really satisfactory result.

The Delta of the Ganges, within the extent where the influence of the tides is felt, is covered with a dense jungle of such trees as are peculiar to salt marshes, and is called the Sunderbunds, which name is a corruption of vernacular words, meaning the Beautiful Forest. Beautiful, indeed, it can only be called in virtue of the luxuriance of the vegetation, for the trees are stunted and comparatively insignificant, consisting of such growths as the mangrove, standing, as it were, on stilts in the mud; the sonneratia, akin to the purple loosestrife of our ditches, too big, however, to be called even a shrub; the *ægicera*, *heritiera*, &c. But the swamp is fertile in giant grasses and reed-maces, and the water-courses are fringed with the curious screw-pine, *Nipa fruticans*; whilst large tracts are covered with the marsh phoenix, an elegant dwarf palm, some six or eight feet high. Such regions, it may be supposed, are not healthy, but the vegetation in a large measure depends on the character of the tides, and therefore it is in the western parts of the Delta, where the rise and fall are not great, and the influx of fresh water inconsiderable, that the jungle is thickest. It decreases to the eastward, and near the mouth of the Megna, where the bay is nearly fresh, the muddy shores are, for the most part, devoid of vegetation. One of the stations in the Sunderbunds is called Burrisaul, and this place has given its name to certain singular sounds which are heard in that region in the rainy season, and are called the "Guns of Burrisaul." There is no especial propriety in the phenomenon being connected with Burrisaul, for the noise is heard at Backergunj and surrounding places, and even at Dacca. It is described as being like "the loud, sudden boom of a heavy gun." The discharges vary in frequency and are heard generally at night, or, it may be, are more noticed at night, and there are the following peculiarities about them:

1. They are only heard in the rainy season.

2. They proceed from the south, and are heard one hundred miles inland.

3. They seem to come still from the south, even on the sea-coast, and are not materially louder there than at Dacca.

It may be supposed that, by imaginative Eastern races, these strange sounds are associated with their superstitions, and in-

terpreted by such an hypothesis as their different faiths would be likely to suggest. Now it is well known that, with Mohammedans, the second coming of the Imam Mehdee, who mysteriously disappeared in the third century of the Hegira, is looked upon in the same light in which some amongst us regard the so-called Millennium; there is to be a personal reign of the Imam, and the saints are to triumph over all infidels. So in the mysterious night-guns, the rude Mussulman of the Sunderbunds hears the last great battle already begun, and imagines that the Imam is in full conflict with his enemies. But the discharges have continued from generation to generation, and all things continue as at the first, and still the Coming lingers!

The Hindoo, on the other hand, who associates the idea of the south with the exploits of the hero Ram, conceives the sound to proceed from the island of Lunka or Ceylon, and to be caused by the grating hinges of the palace-gate of Ravun.

The Mugs, a quiet race living along the coast, are disposed to believe that there is a large rocky island in the Bay of Bengal, hollowed out with caves and caverns, into which the waves of the sea are constantly tumbling. But this conjecture, like some other scientific conjectures of the day, postulates that which stands most in need of proof—the existence of the island. It is rather singular that, with a government which has never shown itself indifferent to cognate inquiries, this curious phenomenon has not as yet received adequate attention. The theories which have been broached on the subject by Europeans are scarcely more tenable than the explanations offered by native credulity. One idea is that the sound is caused by the falling of river-banks under the constant wash of water. This can only have been suggested by the fact that the slipping of banks does make a noise like the boom of a gun; such explosions may often be heard in the neighbourhood of the Ganges or Jumna up country, during the rains.

But the simple circumstance that no such breaking up of banks occurs in the Sunderbunds, and that, if it did, the noise caused by it could not always proceed from one direction, and be heard at such a distance, disposes of that hypothesis. Nor is the explanation more happy that refers the sound to the breaking of waves on the coast; first, because the sound is not that of waves; next, because on the



coast the sound still proceeds from the south; lastly, because no waves could be heard at a distance of a hundred miles.

The facts of the case seem to point to an atmospheric origin of the phenomenon, and that is about as far, in the present knowledge of details, as theory can go. Those who have heard it say the noise would certainly be put down as thunder, if the boom were not so sharply and definitely given, and if the absence of a subsequent roll were not so marked. And even on this point an acute ear has its own account to give; for the Commissioner of Dacca, writing only last year, says: "It happened to me to be awake the greater part of a night lately, when the reports were unusually frequent, and after very attentive listening for a long time, I could sometimes catch the faintest sound of a rumble succeeding the shot, which induced me to conclude that the reports are caused by the meeting of thunder-clouds at a high elevation from the earth's surface."

We have made use of a report by Mr. Knox Wigat, which, if a little wild when regarded from a scientific point of view, is still able and interesting. This gentleman was commissioned to examine sea-coast localities, with the object of selecting a site for a marine sanitarium in connection with Burrisaul, and in his report he has given many particulars of the local phenomenon. Perhaps, if he were associated with a person of scientific training, between them they might arrive at a satisfactory solution of the mystery.

But, explained or unexplained, so surely as July comes round, far out in the tropic Sunderbunds, through the long darkness, in hushes of the plashing rain, and amidst the hum of myriads of insects, to wakeful and feverish ears throb the strange discharges of this mysterious artillery; or startled sleepers sink back relieved, exclaiming, "'Tis but the guns of Burrisaul!"

## A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

### CHAPTER XXIII.

TIME passed, or seemed to pass, with unusual gentleness over Whitford. If some of our acquaintances there had suddenly been called upon to mention the changes that had taken place within two years, they would perhaps have said at first that

there had been none. But changes there had been, nevertheless; and by a few dwellers in the little town they had been keenly felt.

The second summer vacation after that happy holiday time which Rhoda had passed with the Erringtons at Llanryddan arrived. A hot July, winged with thunder-clouds, brooded over the meadows by the Whit. The shadow of Pudcombe Woods was pleasant in the sultry afternoons, and the cattle stood for hours knee-deep in dark pools, overhung by drooping boughs. The great school-room at the Grammar School resounded no more with the tread of young feet, or the murmur of young voices. It was empty, and silent, and dusty; and an overgrown spider had thrown his grey tapestry right across the oriel window, so that it was painted, warp and woof, with brave purple and ruby blazonries from the old stained glass.

Doctor Bodkin and his family were away at a seaside place in the South of England. Mr. Diamond had gone on a solitary excursion afoot. Even Pudcombe Hall was deserted; although young Pawkins was expected to return thither, later in the season, for the shooting. Rhoda Maxfield had been sent to her half-brother Seth, at Duckwell Farm, to get strong and sunburned; and as she was allowed to be by herself almost as much as she wished—Mrs. Seth Maxfield being a bustling, active woman, who would not have thought of suspending or modifying her daily avocations for the sake of entertaining any visitor whatever—Rhoda spent her time, not unhappily, in a sort of continuous day-dream, sitting with a book of poetry under a hedge in the hayfield, or wandering with her little nephew, Seth Maxfield the younger, in Pudcombe Woods, which were near her brother's farm. She liked looking back better than looking forward, perhaps; and enacted in her imagination many a scene that had occurred at dear Llanryddan over and over again. But still there were many times when she indulged in hopeful anticipations as to Algy's return. He had come back to London after his foreign travel, and had spent another brilliant season under the patronage of his great relations. And then a rumour had reached Whitford that Lord Seely had at length obtained the promise of a good post for him, and that he might be expected to revisit Whitford in the autumn at latest. Mrs. Errington had been invited to a country house of

Lord Seely's, in Westmoreland, to meet her son, and had set out on her visit in high spirits. Rhoda was thus cut off from hearing frequently of Algernon, through his mother, but she looked forward to seeing them together in September. Rhoda missed her friend and patroness; but she missed her less at Duckwell than she would have done in the dull house in the High-street.

On the whole, she was not unhappy during those sultry summer weeks. Modest and humble-minded as she was, she had come to understand that she was considered pretty and pleasing by the ladies and gentlemen whose acquaintance she had made. No caressing words, no flattering epithets, no pet names, had been bestowed upon her by her father's old friends and companions. She was just simply Rhoda Maxfield to them; never "Primrose," or "Pretty one," or "Rhoda dear;" and the Methodists, however blind to her attractive qualities, had displayed considerable vigilance in pointing out her backsliding, and exhorting her to make every effort to become convinced of sin. Certainly the society of ladies and gentlemen was infinitely more agreeable.

Then, too, there had dawned on her some idea that Mr. Diamond felt a warm admiration for her—perhaps something even warmer than admiration. Miss Chubb (who delighted to foster any amatory sentiments which she might observe in the young persons around her, and was fond of saying, with a languishing droop of her plump, rubicund, good-humoured countenance, that she would not for the world see other young hearts blighted by early disappointment, as hers had been) had dropped several hints to that effect sufficiently broad to be understood even by the bashful Rhoda. And, a little to her own surprise, Rhoda had felt something like gratification, in consequence; Mr. Diamond was such a very clever gentleman. Although he wasn't rich, yet everybody thought a great deal of him. Even Dr. Bodkin (decidedly the most awful embodiment of authority whom Rhoda had ever yet known) treated Mr. Diamond with consideration. And Miss Minnie was his intimate friend. Rhoda had not the least idea of ever reciprocating Mr. Diamond's sentiments. But she could not help feeling that the existence of those sentiments increased her own importance in the world. And she had a lurking idea that it might, if known to Algy, increase her importance in his eyes also.

As to Mr. Diamond's part in the matter, Rhoda, to say truth, concerned herself very little with that. Partly from a humble estimate of herself, and partly from that maiden incapacity for conceiving the fire and force of a masculine passion, which often makes girls pass for cruel who are only childish, she never had thought of Mr. Diamond as seriously suffering for her sake. But yet she was less cold and repellent to him than she had once been. It is difficult not to thaw somewhat in the presence of one whose words and looks make a genial atmosphere for that sensitive plant—youthful vanity.

Rhoda's wardrobe, which by this time had become considerable in quantity and tasteful in quality, was a great source of amusement to her. She delighted to trim, and stitch, and alter, and busy her fingers with the manufacture of bright-coloured bows of ribbon and dainty muslin frills. Mrs. Seth looked contemptuous at what she called "Rhoda's finery," and told her she would never do for a farmer's wife if she spent so much time over a parcel of frippery. Seth Maxfield shook his head gravely, and hoped that Rhoda was not given up utterly to worldliness and vanity; but feared that she had learned no good at St. Chad's church, but had greatly backslided since the days of her attendance at chapel.

For the Seth Maxfields still belonged to the Wesleyan connexion, and disapproved of the change that had taken place among the family at Whitford. Not that Seth was a deeply religious man. But his father's desertion of the Wesleyans appeared to him in the light of a party defection. It was "ratting;" and ratting, as Seth thought, without the excuse of a bribe.

"Look how well father has prospered!" he would say to his wife. "He's as warm a man, is father, as 'ere a one in Whitford. And the Church folks bought their tea and sugar of him all the same when he belonged to the Society. But I don't believe the Society will spend their money with him now as they did. So that's so much clean lost. I'm not so strict as some, myself; nor I don't see the use of it. But I do think a man ought to stick to what he's been brought up to. 'Specially when its had the manifest blessing of Providence! If the Lord was so well satisfied with father's being a Wesleyan, I think father might ha' been satisfied too."

Still there had been no quarrel between the Whitford Maxfields and those of Duck-

well. They came together so seldom that opportunities for quarrelling were rare. And Seth had too great a respect for such manifestations of Providential approbation as had been vouchsafed to his father, to be willing to break entirely with the old man. So, when old Max proposed to send Rhoda to the farm for a few weeks, he paying a weekly stipend for her board, his son and his son's wife had at once agreed to the proposition. And as they were not persons who brought their religious theories into the practical service of daily life, Rhoda's conscience was not disturbed by having a high and stern standard of duty held up for her attainment at every moment.

The Wesleyan preacher at that time in the district was a frequent guest at Duckwell Farm. And in the long summer evenings one or two neighbours would occasionally drop in to the cool stone-flagged parlour, where brother Jackson would read a chapter and offer up a prayer. And afterwards there would be smoking of pipes and drinking of home-brewed by the men; while Mrs. Seth and Rhoda would sit on a bench in the apple-orchard, near to the open window of the parlour, and sew, and talk, or listen to the conversation from within, as they pleased.

Rhoda perceived quickly enough that the Duckwell Farm species of Methodism was very different from the Methodism of David Powell. Mr. Jackson never said anything to frighten her. He talked, indeed, of sin, and of the dangers that beset sinners; but he never spoke as if they were real to him—as if he heard and saw all the terrible things he discoursed of so glibly. Then Mr. Jackson was, Rhoda thought, a somewhat greedy eater. He did not smoke, it was true; but he took a good share of Seth's strong ale, and was not above indulging in gossip—perhaps to please himself, perhaps to please Mrs. Seth Maxfield.

Rhoda drew a comparison in her own mind between brother Jackson and the stately rector of St. Chad's, and felt much satisfaction at the contrast between them. How much nicer it was to be a member of a Church of England congregation; where one heard Dr. Bodkin or Mr. Warlock speak a not too long discourse in correct English, and with that refined accent which Rhoda's ear had learned to prize, and where the mellow old organ made a quivering atmosphere of music that seemed to mingle with the light from the painted windows; than to sit on a deal bench in a white-washed chapel, and

painfully keep oneself broad awake whilst brother Jackson or brother Hinks bawled out a series of disjointed sentences, beginning with "Oh!" and displaying a plentiful lack of aspirates!

On the whole, perhaps, her stay at Duckwell Farm was a potent agent in confirming Rhoda in orthodox views of religion.

Generally, as she sat beside Mrs. Seth in the parlour, or on the bench outside the window, Rhoda withdrew her attention from the talk of brother Jackson and the others. She could think her own thoughts, and dream her own dreams, whilst she was knitting a stocking or hemming a pinafore for little Seth. But sometimes a name was mentioned at these meetings that she could not hear with indifference. It was the name of David Powell.

The tone in which he was spoken of now was very opposite to the chorus of praise, which had accompanied every mention of him among the Whitford Methodists, two years ago. There were rumours that he had defied the authority of Conference, and intended to secede from the Society. He was said to have been preaching strange doctrine in the remote parts of Wales, and to have caused and encouraged extravagant manifestations, such as were known to have prevailed at the preachings of Berridge and Hikes, seventy or eighty years ago; and earlier still, at the first open-air sermons of John Wesley himself, at Bristol. Brother Jackson shook his head, and pursed up his lips at the rumours. He had never much approved of Powell; and Seth Maxfield had distinctly disapproved of him. Seth had been brought up in the old sleepy days, when members of the Society in Whitford were comfortably undisturbed by the voice of an "awakening" preacher. He had resented the fuss that had been made about David Powell. He had been still more annoyed by his father's secession, which he attributed to Powell's over zeal and presumption. And he, by his own example, encouraged a hostile and critical tone in speaking of the preacher.

There was, indeed, but one voice raised in his defence in the parlour at Duckwell Farm. This was the voice of Richard Gibbs, the head-groom at Pudcombe Hall, who sometimes came over to Duckwell to join in the prayer-meetings there. Although Richard Gibbs was but a servant, he was a trusted and valued one; and he was received by the farmer and his wife with considerable civility. Richard "knew his place," as Mrs. Seth said, and was not



"one of them as if you give 'em an inch they'll take an ell." And then he had a considerable knowledge of farriery, and had more than once given good advice to Farmer Maxfield respecting the treatment of sick horses and cattle. Seth was fond of repeating that he himself was "not so strict as some," finding, indeed, that a reputation for strictness, in a Methodistical sense, put him at a disadvantage with his fellow farmers on market-days. But whenever Richard Gibbs was spoken of, he would add to this general disclaimer of peculiar piety on his own part, "Not, mind you, but what there's some as conversion does a wonderful deal for, to this day, thanks be! Why, there's Dicky Gibbs, head-groom at Pudcombe Hall. Talk of blasphemers—well Dicky was a blasphemer! And now his lips are as pure from evil speaking as my little maid's there. And he's the only man I ever knew as had to do with horses that wouldn't tell you a lie. At first, I believe there was some at the Hall—I name no names—didn't like Dicky's plain truths. There was a carriage horse to be sold, and Dicky spoke out and told this and that, and young master couldn't get his price. But in the long run it answers. Oh! I'm not against a fervent conversion, nor yet against conviction of sin—for some."

So Richard Gibbs sat many a summer evening in the flagged parlour at Duckwell Farm, and his melancholy, clean-shaven, lantern-jawed face was a familiar spectacle at prayer-meetings there.

"I have been much grieved and exercised in spirit on behalf of brother Powell," said Mr. Jackson, in his thick voice.

The expounding and the prayers were over. Seth had lighted his pipe; so had Roger Heath, the baker, from Pudcombe village. A great cool jug of ale stood on the table, and the setting sun sent his rays into the room, tempered by a screen of jessamine and vine leaves that hung down outside the window.

"Ah! And reason too!" said Seth gruffly. "He's been getting further and further out of the right furrow this many a day."

"They do say," observed sour-faced Roger Heath, "that there's dreadful scenes with them poor Welsh at his field-preachings. Men and women stricken down like bullocks, and screechings and convulsions, like as if they was all possessed with the devil."

"Lauk!" cried Mrs. Seth eagerly. "Why, how is that, then?"

Rhoda, listening outside, behind the

screen of vine leaves at the open window, could not repress a shudder at the thought that, had David Powell shown this new power of his a year or two ago, she herself might have been among the convulsed who bore testimony to his terrible influence.

"How is that, Mrs. Maxfield?" returned Richard Gibbs. "Why, how can it be except by abounding grace?"

"Nay, Mr. Gibbs, but how dreadful it seems, don't it? Just think of falling down in a fit in the open field!"

"Just think of living and dying unawakened to sin! Is not that a hundred thousand times more dreadful?"

"I hope it don't need to roll about like Bedlamites to be awakened to a sense of sin, Mr. Gibbs!" cried Seth Maxfield.

"The Lord forbid!" ejaculated brother Jackson.

"A likely tale!" added Mrs. Seth, cheerfully.

"I'm against all such doings," said Roger Heath, shaking his head.

"But, if it be the Lord's doing, sir?" remonstrated Richard Gibbs, speaking slowly and with an anxious lack-lustre gaze at the white-washed ceiling, as though counsel might be read there. "And I've heard tell, that John Wesley did the same at his field-preachings."

Brother Jackson hastily wiped his mouth, after a deep draught of ale, before replying, "That was in the beginning, when such things may have been needful. But now, I fear they only bring scandal upon us, and strengthen scoffers."

"I tell you what it is," said Seth, taking the pipe from his mouth, and waving it up and down to emphasise his words, "it's my opinion as David Powell's not quite—not quite right in his head."

"Taint the first time that thought has crossed my mind," said the baker, who had once upon a time been uneasy under the yoke of Powell's stern views as to weights and measures.

"Of course," pursued Seth, argumentatively, "we've got to draw a line. Religion is one thing, and rampaging is another. From the first, when Powell began rampaging, I mistrusted what it would come to."

"The human brain is a very delicate and mysterious organ," said brother Jackson.

"Ah!" ejaculated Heath, with an air of profundity, as of one the extent of whose acquaintance with the human brain was not easily to be set forth in words, "you may well say so, sir. There you're right, indeed, brother Jackson."

"Why, there it is!" cried Seth. "And Powell, he overtaxed the human brain. It's like flying in the face of Providence almost, to want to go so much beyond your neighbours. Why, he'd fast till he well-nigh starved himself."

"But he gave all he spared from his own stomach to the poor," put in Gibbs, looking sad and perplexed.

"I call all that rampaging," returned Seth, with a touch of his father's obstinacy.

"Dr. Evans read out an account of these doings in Wales from a newspaper in Mr. Barker the chemist's shop in Whitford last Saturday," said Heath. "I heard it. And Dr. Evans said it was catching, and that such like excitement was dangerous, for you never knew where it might end. And Dr. Evans is of a Welsh family himself," he added, bringing out this clause, as though it strikingly illustrated or elucidated the topic under discussion.

Mrs. Seth drew her little boy close to her, and covered his curly poll with her large maternal hand, as though to protect the little "human brain" within from all danger. "Mercy me!" she said, "I hope Powell won't come into these parts any more! I should be frightened to go to chapel, or to let the children go either."

"Oh, you need not be alarmed, Mrs. Maxfield," said brother Jackson, with a superior smile.

"Nay, but if it is catching, Mr. Jackson!" persisted the anxious mother.

"Tut, lass! It isn't like measles!" said her husband.

The ale being by this time exhausted and the pipes smoked out, brother Jackson rose to depart, and the baker went away with him. Seth Maxfield detained Gibbs for a few minutes to ask his advice about a favourite cart-horse.

"Well, Mr. Gibbs," said the housewife, when, the conference being over, he bade her good evening, "and when are your folks coming back to the Hall?"

"Not just yet, ma'am. Young master is gone to Westmoreland, I hear, to a wedding at some nobleman's house there. He'll be back at Pudcombe for the shooting."

"A wedding, eh?" said Mrs. Seth, with eager feminine interest in the topic. "Not his own wedding, I suppose?"

"Oh no, ma'am. 'Tis some friend of his, I believe, that he knew at Whitford; Erringham, I think the name is—a young

gentleman that's going to marry the nobleman's niece. The housekeeper at the Hall was telling some of my fellow-servants about it the other day. But I'm ill at remembering the chat I hear. And 'tis unprofitable work too. Good evening, ma'am. Farewell, Seth," stooping down to pat the little one's curly head. "May the Lord bless and keep you!"

Mrs. Seth stood out in the apple-orchard, with two of her children clinging to her skirts, and held up her hand to shade her eyes as she watched the departing figure of Richard Gibbs moving across the meadow, in the rosy evening light. Then she turned to the wooden bench where Rhoda was sitting, huddled together, with her work lying in her lap. "You didn't come in to prayers, Rhoda," said her sister-in-law. "But, however, you can hear it all just as well outside, as in. If it wasn't for civility to Mr. Jackson, I'd liefer stay out here these fine summer evenings, myself. And I was thinking—why, child, what a white face you've got! Like a sheet of white paper, for all the world! And your hands are quite cold, though it's been downright sultry! Mercy me, don't go and get sick on our hands, Rhoda! What will your father say? Come, you'd best get to bed, and I'll make you a hot posset myself."

Rhoda passively followed her sister-in-law to the fresh lavender-scented chamber which she occupied; and she consented to go to bed at once. Her head ached, she said, but she declined the hot posset, and only asked to be left quiet.

"There's always some bother with girls of that delicate sort," said Mrs. Seth to her husband, when she went downstairs again. "Rhoda's mother was just such another; looked as if you might blow her away. I can't think whatever made your father marry her! Not but Rhoda's a nice-tempered girl enough, and very patient with the children. But, do you know, Seth, I'm afraid she's got a chill or something, sitting out in the orchard so late."

"What makes you think so?"

"Well, she had a queer, scared kind of look on her face."

"Nonsense! Catching cold don't make people look scared."

"Something makes her look scared, I tell you. It's either she's sickening for some fever, or else she's seen a ghost!"